



Connecticut General Assembly
SENATE DEMOCRATS

Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591

Good afternoon Senator Haskell, Representative Haddad and the Higher Education and Employment Advancement committee. We write today about **SB 273 AAC Debt Free College**. As we all know, student loan debt has become a critical issue in America. Nationally it is estimated that student loan debt has ballooned to over \$1.5 trillion. In Connecticut, that has translated to a per capita student loan debt for the class of 2016 of over \$35,000. This puts Connecticut as the third most student loan indebted state in the nation behind only New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

Student debt influences where new graduates live and what types of jobs they are able to pursue. That is one major reason why it is important for Connecticut to recognize this as a factor for where young professionals move to, work and raise families. In order for Connecticut to be a favorable option for this demographic, it is critical that we as a state invest in our future. A fundamental pillar of our future is the young people growing up in Connecticut and the young people that may consider moving to Connecticut. We need this group to stay and grow Connecticut. Our businesses, our economy and our prosperity depend upon it.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin M. Looney".

Martin M. Looney
President Pro Tempore
State Senator 11th District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Duff".

Majority Leader
Bob Duff
State Senator 25th District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Daugherty Abrams".

Mary Daugherty Abrams
State Senator 13th District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dennis Bradley".

Dennis Bradley
State Senator 23rd District



Christine Cohen
State Senator 12th District



Will Haskell
State Senator 26th District



Julie Kushner
State Senator 24th District



Matt Lesser
State Senator 9th District



Marilyn Moore
State Senator 22nd District



Cathy Osten
State Senator 19th District